

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10 are pending. Claims 1-10 stand rejected. Claim 1 has been amended.

Claims 11-25 have been cancelled. Claim 26 has been added. Support for the amendments is found in the specification, the drawings, and in the claims as originally filed.

Applicants submit that the amendments do not add new matter.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 1-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,460,094 of Hanson, et al. ("Hanson"). The Examiner stated that

Regarding Claim 1, Hanson, et al. teaches an apparatus comprising a serial port (45, 46 in fig. 1) configured to interface with a separate host (fig. 1-3; col. 3, line 35 – col. 4, line 65); one serial interface engine (SIE) connected to the serial port (fig. 1-3); a first interface unit (40 in fig. 1) and a second interface unit (30 in fig. 1) connected to the serial interface engine (summary; figs. 1-5; col. 3, line 35 – col. 5, line 63)

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Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is not anticipated by Hanson under 35 U.S.C. 102§(e). Amended claim 1 includes the following limitations:

An apparatus comprising:
a serial port configured to interface with a separate host;
one serial interface engine (SIE) connected to the serial port; and
at least a first interface unit and a second interface unit connected to the serial interface engine.

(Amended claim 1) (emphasis added)

Applicants have amended claim 1 only to include the conjunction "and" between the ultimate and penultimate limitations. Applicants respectfully submit that Hanson does not include the limitation of a first and second interface unit connected to the serial interface engine. Rather, Hanson describes a peripheral device connected to a computer having one interface type.

As disclosed in Hanson, the interface type of the computer is one of two different types of interfaces. This is the whole point of Hanson providing a peripheral device that can determine which of the two types of interfaces it is connected to and configure itself accordingly. Hanson is disclosing two interface types, and at that, a computer having only one of the two with a peripheral that can determine which one and effect configuration based upon this determination.

In contrast, the invention as claimed, for example in claim 1, discloses two “interface units” both of which are connected to a single serial interface engine. The confusion has apparently arisen from the similarity between the term “interfaces” of Hanson, and the term “interface units” of the present application. A thorough reading of both will clarify the fundamental distinction between them. The present invention allows, in one embodiment, multiple interface units to be connected to a host computer via a single USB line, while Hanson discloses a peripheral device that can be effectively connected to a computer having either of two interface types.

For these reasons, applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is not anticipated by Hanson. Given that claims 2 – 10 depend, directly or indirectly from claim 1, applicants respectfully submit that claims 2 – 10 are, likewise, not anticipated by Hanson.

In regard to the Examiner’s rejection of claim 4, applicants respectfully submit that claim 4 is not anticipated by Hanson due to its dependence upon claim 1 for the reasons stated above. Moreover, applicants respectfully submit that Hanson in no way discloses the limitation of “a virtual hub comprising a firmware unit configured to emulate a hub having multiple ports.” Such limitation does not appear to be even suggested in Hanson, and the Examiner has provided no reference to such a limitation in Hanson. Applicants respectfully submit that Hanson does not disclose this limitation and request the Examiner to direct applicants to such disclosure or withdraw the rejection.

Applicants have added new claim 26, which incorporates all of the limitations of original claims 1 – 4. Applicants respectfully submit that new claim 26 is not anticipated by Hanson for at least all of the reasons discussed above in reference to the rejections of claims 1 and 4.

It is respectfully submitted that in view of the amendments and arguments set forth herein, the applicable rejections and objections have been overcome. If there are any additional charges, please charge Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any fee deficiency that may be due.

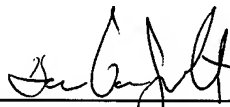
Respectfully submitted,

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